CLAIMS

1. A method of determining a support entitlement level comprising:

    receiving a product support request from a customer;

5   receiving a technical support identification (TSID) from the customer;

    validating the TSID;

    classifying the TSID into at least one of a plurality of classifications, wherein the

    plurality of classifications includes a contract classification; and

    assigning at least one of a plurality of support levels to the classified TSID

10 wherein the assigned support level corresponds to the TSID classification and wherein

    the TSID is received, validated, classified and the support level assigned before an agent

    is notified of the product support request.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the TSID includes receiving the TSID

15 via a telephone keypad entry.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein receiving the TSID includes:

    receiving at least one of a plurality of aspects of a unit from the customer;

    retrieving the TSID from at least one of a plurality of databases, wherein the

20 retrieved TSID matches at least one of the plurality of aspects of the unit in the at least

    one of the plurality of databases.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of aspects of the unit includes: a

    unit serial number, a host system serial number, a unit source and a unit part number.

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5.   The method of claim 1, wherein the TSID is numeric.

6.   The method of claim 1, wherein validating the TSID includes at least one of a group consisting of:

5   confirming the TSID includes a predetermined number of characters;

            confirming the TSID matches at least one TSID entry in at least one of a plurality of databases;

            confirming the TSID matches a predetermined format; and

            confirming the TSID includes a correct checksum.

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7.   The method of claim 1, wherein classifying the TSID includes:

            classifying the TSID as a contract TSID if the TSID identifies at least one of a group consisting of a first support contract and a unit assigned to a second support contract; and

15   wherein assigning at least one of a plurality of support levels to the classified TSID includes assigning a contract support level to the contract TSID.

8.   The method of claim 1, wherein classifying the TSID includes:

            retrieving at least one of a plurality of aspects of the customer's unit from at least

20   one of a plurality of databases.

9.   The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of support levels includes:

            an end of life support level;

            a knowledge base support level;

an email support level;

an OEM support level; and

an illicit product support level.

5   10.   The method of claim 1, wherein classifying the TSID includes:

classifying the TSID as an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) TSID if the

TSID is associated with a unit having an OEM distribution channel in at least one of the

plurality of databases.

10   11.   The method of claim 10, wherein classifying the TSID includes:

classifying the OEM TSID as an illicit TSID if the customer obtained the unit

from a source other than the OEM distribution channel.

12.   The method of claim 1, wherein classifying the TSID includes:

15   classifying the TSID as an illicit TSID if a unit corresponding to the TSID is

identified as a counterfeit unit.

13.   The method of claim 1 wherein classifying the TSID includes:

classifying the TSID as an illicit TSID; and

20   reporting the illicit TSID.

14.   The method of claim 1, wherein classifying the TSID into at least one of the

plurality of classifications includes using a plurality of aspects of a unit to classify the

TSID, wherein the unit corresponds to the TSID, and wherein the customer's OS is one of the plurality of aspects of the unit.

15. The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling delivery of the assigned support level.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein enabling delivery of the assigned support level includes:

notifying an agent.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein enabling delivery of the assigned support level includes

creating a new incident record;

determining if there is an open incident record associated with the TSID;

retrieving the open incident record if the open incident is associated with the TSID; and

outputting the new incident record and the open incident record to the agent.

18. A system for determining a support entitlement level comprising:

an automated call distributor (ACD), wherein the ACD provides access to a customer and wherein the ACD includes:

a processor;

a memory system coupled to the processor, wherein the memory system includes instructions executable by the processor to:

receive a product support request from a customer;

receive a technical support identification (TSID) from a customer;

validate the TSID

classify the TSID into at least one of a plurality of classifications,

wherein the plurality of classifications includes a contract classification;

and

assign at least one of a plurality of support levels to the classified

TSID wherein the assigned support level corresponds to the TSID

classification and wherein the TSID is received, validated, classified and

the support level assigned before an agent is notified of the product

support request.

19.   The system of claim 18, the memory system further includes instructions
executable by the processor to enable delivery of the assigned support level.

20.   The system of claim 18, wherein the ACD includes a server.

21.   The system of claim 18 wherein the ACD includes access to a plurality of
databases.

22.   The system of claim 18 further comprising an agent's desktop, wherein the
agent's desktop is linked to the ACD.

23. The system of claim 18 wherein the access to the customer includes a telephone interface.

24. A method of determining a support entitlement level comprising:

5   receiving a product support request from a customer;

receiving a technical support identification (TSID) from the customer, wherein the customer enters the TSID via a telephone keypad and wherein the TSID is numeric;

confirming the TSID includes a predetermined number of characters;

classifying the TSID into at least one of a plurality of classifications, wherein the

10   plurality of classifications includes a contract classification;

assigning at least one of a plurality of support levels to the classified TSID wherein the assigned support level corresponds to the TSID classification and wherein the TSID is received, validated, classified and the support level assigned before an agent is notified of the product support request; and

15   routing the product support request according to the assigned support level.